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comb drive means for driving the comb between a storage position and a discharge position, the comb projecting down into the litter chamber to a level below the fill level while the comb moves toward the discharge position so that the comb engages clumps in the litter and moves such clumps toward the discharge position; and

waste level sensor means for sensing when waste has reached a predetermined level in the receptacle, and wherein said waste level sensor means is arranged to perform a sensing operation internally of said receptacle.

27. (Amended) A self-cleaning cat litter box comprising:
a pan-shaped housing defining an upwardly open litter chamber to be filled to a given fill level with cat litter;
a comb disposed in the litter chamber;

comb drive means for driving the comb between a storage position and a discharge position, the comb projecting down into the litter chamber to a level below the fill level while the comb moves toward the discharge position so that the comb engages clumps in the litter and moves such clumps toward the discharge position; and

mode selector means for selecting between at least a manual operation mode for said comb drive means and an automatic operation mode for said comb drive means.

33. (Amended) A self-cleaning cat litter box comprising:
a pan-shaped housing defining an upwardly open litter chamber to be filled to a given fill level with cat litter;

a comb drive coupled to the housing;
a comb extending between two opposed sidewalls and being coupled to the comb drive and movable between a storage position and a discharge position, the comb projecting down into the litter chamber to a level below the fill level so that the comb engages clumps in the litter and moves such clumps toward the

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discharge position; and

a mode selector switch operatively connected to said comb drive, the switch being moveable between a manual operation position wherein an operator causes the comb to move toward the discharge position and an automatic operation position wherein the comb moves toward the discharge position automatically upon the occurrence of a predetermined event.

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34. (Amended) A self-cleaning cat litter box comprising:
a pan-shaped housing defining an upwardly open litter
chamber to be filled to a given fill level with cat litter;

a waste receptacle located outside the litter chamber;

a comb disposed in the litter chamber;

comb drive means for driving the comb between a storage position and a discharge position, the comb projecting down into the litter chamber to a level below the fill level while the comb moves toward the discharge position so that the comb engages clumps in the litter and moves such clumps toward the discharge position; and

a waste level sensor coupled to the litter chamber,
wherein said waste level sensor is arranged to perform a sensing operation internally of said receptacle.

35. (Amended) The litter box of claim 34 further including an alarm coupled to the waste level sensor, the alarm being activated when the waste level sensor determines that waste in the waste receptacle has reached a predetermined height.

[Rewrite claims 38, 43 and 44 in independent form as follows:

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38. (Amended) A self-cleaning cat litter box comprising:
a pan-shaped housing defining an upwardly open litter
chamber to be filled to a given fill level with cat litter;

a waste receptacle located outside the litter chamber;

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a comb disposed in the litter chamber;

comb drive means for driving the comb between a storage position and a discharge position, the comb projecting down into the litter chamber to a level below the fill level while the comb moves toward the discharge position so that the comb engages clumps in the litter and moves such clumps toward the discharge position; and

waste level sensor means for sensing when waste has reached a predetermined level in the receptacle; and

wherein said waste level sensor means includes a source of radiation.

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43. (Amended) A self-cleaning cat litter box comprising:
a pan-shaped housing defining an upwardly open litter chamber to be filled to a given fill level with cat litter;

a comb drive coupled to the housing;

a comb extending between two opposed sidewalls and being coupled to the comb drive and movable between a storage position and a discharge position, the comb projecting down into the litter chamber to a level below the fill level so that the comb engages clumps in the litter and moves such clumps toward the discharge position; and

a mode selector switch, the switch being moveable between a manual operation position wherein an operator causes the comb to move toward the discharge position and an automatic operation position wherein the comb moves toward the discharge position automatically upon the occurrence of a predetermined event; and

wherein said comb drive is operated on a cyclical basis when said mode selector switch is in said manual operation position.

44. (Amended) A self-cleaning cat litter box comprising:
a pan-shaped housing defining an upwardly open litter chamber to be filled to a given fill level with cat litter;